

Provincial Oxygen Funding

This document highlights the **Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living (SAIL) Home Oxygen Program** that provides funding towards the cost of home oxygen therapy for those who meet the program criteria.

Testing is provided through Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) employed qualified health professionals who are trained in home oxygen testing. Assessment and treatment are delivered through private oxygen companies contracted by Saskatchewan Health.

Lung Saskatchewan is contracted by SAIL to provide education/training, information, and resources for health professionals and clients throughout Saskatchewan on home oxygen testing, as well as rural nocturnal testing.

Federal Oxygen Funding

Individuals eligible for funding under Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) must satisfy different criteria for oxygen testing; review the [NIHB Home Oxygen Benefits](#) to learn more. **Testing may be completed through the SHA or by a home oxygen company.**

Clients who have health coverage through **Veteran's Affairs Canada (VAC)** have specific criteria for oxygen testing also; review the [VAC website](#) to learn more.

The SAIL Home Oxygen Therapy Program in Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living (SAIL) provides funding for oxygen if you are a provincially-funded resident who has been tested and has low levels of oxygen. The testing is done by measuring your oxygen level with either an **arterial blood gas** (ABG – a needle poke) or an **oximeter** (a sensor that clips on the finger).

TEST REQUIRED	OXYGEN PACKAGE
<p>Continuous oxygen test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxygen levels will be measured while you are at rest. If an oximeter was used for the test, and your oxygen level is low, the testing will be repeated while you are at rest and using oxygen. A blood sample does not need to be repeated while you are using oxygen. 	<p>If you have low oxygen levels at rest and your oxygen levels improve while using oxygen, SAIL will provide initial funding for a basic package of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An oxygen concentrator AND 10 portable oxygen cylinders (E-Size cylinders or smaller) per month* <p>Initial funding is for 6 months, and then testing will be repeated.</p>
<p>Exertional oxygen test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxygen levels will be measured by an oximeter while you are walking. If your oxygen level is low, the testing will be repeated while you are walking and using oxygen. 	<p>If you have low oxygen levels only during exercise and your exercise ability improves with the use of oxygen, SAIL will provide funding for a basic package of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 portable oxygen cylinders (E-Size cylinders or smaller) per month OR a POC* <p>Initial funding is for 6 months and then testing will be repeated.</p>
<p>Nocturnal oxygen test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxygen levels will be measured with a pulse oximeter while you are sleeping. If your oxygen level is low, the testing will be repeated while you are sleeping and using oxygen. 	<p>If you have low oxygen levels only during sleep and your oxygen levels improve while using oxygen, SAIL will provide funding for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An oxygen concentrator <p>Initial funding is for up to 1 year.</p>

- *Alternate oxygen systems are available* - if you choose an alternate oxygen system (such as a portable concentrator, oxygen conserving device, or transfill system), some of the costs are covered, but you may be required to pay any additional rental costs.
- We suggest you contact a home oxygen supply company about the different oxygen systems available, the cost, and if you meet the criteria for these optional items.
- For all patients needing oxygen, repeat testing may be required to ensure appropriate oxygen levels are maintained.

If you have further questions about the SAIL program, please call 1-888-787-8996.

The Importance of Oxygen

- Everyone needs oxygen to survive.
- The air we breathe contains 21% oxygen.
- Not everyone who is short of breath needs home oxygen therapy.
- Studies have shown that home oxygen therapy improves the survival of people with chronic lung diseases **and** who have low levels of oxygen.

When To Use Home Oxygen

- People who have been prescribed **continuous home oxygen** should use it 18-24 hours per day. This includes using it during sleep and exercise. Continuous home oxygen may be prescribed in the community or from the hospital.
- Some people only need to use oxygen while they are moving their body (**exertional home oxygen**).
- Some people only need oxygen while they are sleeping (**nocturnal home oxygen**).
- Some people only need oxygen near the end-of-life (**end-stage palliative home oxygen**). No testing is required for end-stage palliative oxygen. However, approval from both a physician and a palliative care case manager is needed, as specific criteria must be met. Generally, this oxygen is used continuously.

The Oxygen Prescription

- Only a physician or nurse practitioner may prescribe oxygen.
- The prescription will include the flow rate of oxygen to be used and when to use it.
- It is very important to use oxygen only at the prescribed rate. Do not adjust your oxygen rate above or below what has been prescribed.
- If you do not feel well on the amount of oxygen you are currently using, please see your doctor for a check-up and speak with your oxygen provider.
- Oxygen is considered a drug; the prescription will need to be renewed yearly, regardless of whether testing is needed. If you get a letter in the mail about renewal, please call your home oxygen company.

Home oxygen may not be forever.

**For example:
If you have a lung infection,
you may only need home
oxygen until you recover.**

**Home oxygen is prescribed
for those with low oxygen
levels.**

**It is not prescribed to for
shortness of breath.**

Oxygen Suppliers

There are three oxygen supply companies in Saskatchewan. Be a wise consumer and choose the oxygen company that will provide the best service to suit your needs.

Careica Health

1-855-672-6262
Fax – 1-306-651-1242

Prairie Oxygen Ltd.

1-877-738-8702
Fax – 1-306-384-0022

Medigas - A Linde Company

1-866-446-6302
Fax – 1-306-933-0437

Role of the Home Oxygen Company

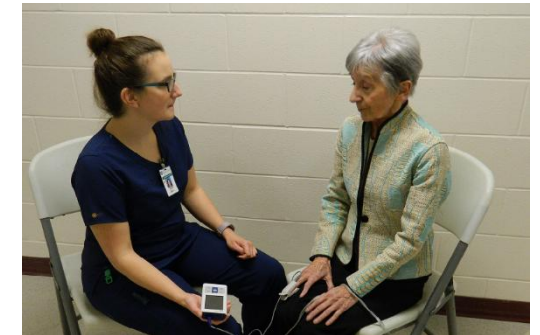
Oxygen companies employ health professionals, technicians for equipment, and drivers for delivery of oxygen.

Health professionals should see their clients on a regular basis to assess their health condition and oxygen status and share this information with the doctor or nurse practitioner.

Roles:

- To provide home oxygen therapy to the client
- To assist in the setup of therapy in the home
- To perform regular respiratory and oxygen assessments on their clients
- To provide the best equipment to assist or improve their client's quality of life and oxygen therapy

Home Oxygen Therapy in Saskatchewan



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